

LABOR DAY REMIX, Eph 2:1-10

1. WELCOME
 - a. HAPPY LABOR DAY
 - i. Tomorrow
 - b. What yall doing tomorrow?
 - c. Who knows what labor day celebrates?
 - d. Holiday we celebrate all those who work hard.
 - e. Those who've worked hard through all the years
 - i. to build our great nation, and provide all we need to live.
2. And it's right that we honor those who work well.
 - a. And recognize how indebted we are to others, even as we are relied on for our own work.
 - b. We have MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR!!!
3. Of course many who do the most and the most important work don't get paid
 - a. Parents who "stay home with the kids" are invest their time and energy into helping care for and raise our children well may not get a paycheck
 - i. But they work a lot
 - ii. And work at one of the most important jobs around!
 - b. And it's not just parents, anyone who invests well in relationships, who works and labors and sacrifices to be a blessing, a support, a good friend to another also works at labors WORTH DOING
 - c. Those who labor in prayer on behalf of others, and for the good of their neighbors, their nation, their kids, their friends, THESE labor well, and their work is GOOD and more vital and effective than we can much see from this angle in time and space.
4. WORK
 - a. It's good, inherently.
 - b. We were designed, created to WORK well
 - i. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.
Genesis 2:15
 - ii. BEFORE THE FALL, Adam had work to do, important work to manage and cultivate the Earth
 - c. Work is good, even a blessing → though as we all know from experience, work is often hard. Often too hard. And things just don't work right.
 - d. Our efforts and work are often now subject to frustration. Even futility.
 - e. Our work AGAINST god has taken its toll
 - i. Our choice first of all in the Garden, and with everyone since, has been to work against the Grain of God's design. To distrust God as Good, and Father. As the giver of all good gifts. And instead to try to work out our own plan for life
 - ii. Work out some way to make life work APART from God.
 - iii. And Death and Destruction reigned.
 1. In our work
 2. In our world
 3. And in our hearts
 - iv. And nothing we could do could fix it.
 - v. NO WORK WE COULD ACCOMPLISH COULD SAVE US
5. Tonight, against THAT backdrop, we're going to consider Labor Day from another angle.
 - a. Instead of celebrating our faithful workers, which is completely good and right to do

- b. Instead we will pause together to consider and celebrate the work that GOD HAS DONE for us
 - c. To save us from the “works” of our sinful hearts
 - d. And to Save us to the uttermost, not only accomplishing FOR us the great work of forgiveness on the Cross
 - e. But also continuing the great work of repairing what was broken in us day by day through his Holy Spirit
6. In short, tonight we Celebrate the Great Work of Jesus FOR US
- a. A LABOR DAY REMIX!
7. Rather than a typical teaching, tonight we’re going to pause and remember, consider How WE have benefitted from HIS WORK
- a. And how we CONTINUE to benefit from His Work
 - b. We’ll do this by reading from his Word
 - i. Rather more like a devotional than a teaching.
 - c. By some times of reflection and journaling personally
 - i. And opportunities for sharing together
 - d. I’m excited to lean in to the unique opportunity we have tonight, as many are away for the Labor Day holiday and our numbers are lower
 - i. I’m excited for us to take this opportunity to shake it up, and engage in some fresh ways
 - e. Should be fun
 - f. And lets pray it’s also rich
8. PRAY
- a. Thank you for this time
 - i. Unique opportunity to shake it up
 - ii. Engage with you
 - b. Please guide our time
 - i. Please meet with us
 - c. Spirit help us to consider and celebrate well YOUR WORK on our behalf
 - i. And remember YOUR WORK to bring us the Good News of the Gospel
 - d. YOU PRAY: God please speak to me tonight
 - i. And give me a fresh encounter with you through your word, and you Spirit
9. Ephesians 2:1-10
- a. Follow along in your bibles. Text may be smallish, will also help you in reflection times.
 - b. Paul, speaking to the church in the city of Ephesus, reminding them where they’d been.
 - c. READ 2:1-3 (RICKY?)
 - d. And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
 - e. Stop and Meditate and Journal
 - i. For those who follow Jesus:
 - 1. You used to be dead in your sins
 - a. You used to follow your own way, and ultimately followed SATAN in all you thought and did

2. Do you remember your life before Christ?
 - a. Do you remember what it was like to be dead in your sins?
3. Take a few moments and write down, What was your life like before you began following Jesus?
 - a. In what specific ways do you resonate with this perspective of your life before Christ?
- ii. For those not yet following Jesus
 1. Seekers & Skeptics!
 2. The scripture say You ARE spiritually dead in your sins
 - a. You are following your own way, and ultimately following SATAN in all you think and do
 3. How does that hit you?
 - a. Do you resonate with that? Or bristle against it?
 - b. If you resonate with it, why? In what ways do you resonate with it
 - c. If you bristle against it, WHY? In what specific ways does this offend you?
- iii. 3 min
- f. SHARE (4-5 min)
 - i. Who's willing to share some of what they wrote
 - ii. Or what that was like for you?
- g. Keep reading
 - i. BUT GOD.....
 - ii. Perhaps the best 2 words in the entire bible
 - iii. All was lost.... We were dead and enslaved
 - iv. With utterly no hope to work our way out
- h. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
 - i. God loves you so much. More than you can fathom.
 - ii. So that when we were dead, he came and died with us
 1. Because of JESUS' great work on the Cross, to take the penalty of our sins upon himself,
 2. He died with you
 3. So you could rise with him
 - iii. So he could conquer death not only for himself, but for you.
 1. So that he could raise you to life
 2. Not only new life now
 3. But eternal life → real physical resurrected life.
 4. Just like Jesus was raised from the dead, physically, himself, never to die again
 5. SO YOU TOO WILL RISE
 - a. Not metaphorically
 - b. Literally

- c. Physically
 - d. You
 - iv. Everybody:
 - 1. What practical difference would it make in your life if you really believed this hope of resurrection was true, and would happen to you?
 - 2. God is described here as rich in mercy, and GREAT in love, and immeasurably kind
 - a. How does that description of God compare with your picture of him?
 - v. SHARE:
 - 1. Answers
 - 2. Any recent situation that made you really long for resurrection
- i. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
 - i. Labor Day letdown → your work doesn't matter
 - 1. At least here
 - 2. All of it amounts to ZILCH when it comes to saving yourself
 - ii. It's not about what you do, or how well you do it
 - iii. But it's about GOD, what he has GRAIIOUSLY done for you
 - 1. So we're all on the same level, no boasting, no self-righteousness
 - iv. All of us offered this great salvation FREE OF CHARGE, only as a gift, paid for at GREAT EXPENSE by Jesus
 - v. And it's a gift God wants you to take
 - vi. And it's not yours till you take it
 - 1. That's the thing with gifts
 - vii. Even those freely given MUST BE RECEIVED for the gift to become yours
 - viii. If you're here tonight, I want you to hear the Gospel
 - 1. That Jesus Christ has worked hard FOR YOU
 - 2. Done for you what you could never do for yourself
 - 3. That even while you were dead in your sins, Jesus died for you
 - a. To make you alive again, against all hope
 - 4. Switched places with you
 - a. So he would get your death
 - b. And you'd get his life
 - c. He'd get your sin
 - d. You'd get his righteousness
 - 5. That's the NEW DEAL!
 - a. It's not fair.
 - b. You didn't earn it
 - c. You don't deserve it
 - 6. But salvation and eternal life is offered to you nonetheless, because God loves you, more than anyone has ever loved you.
 - 7. If you've never accepted that gift tonight, I encourage you to finally do so tonight
 - a. All you have to do to accept the gift is to have FAITH
 - i. Believe that this is true
 - ii. The offer is genuine

- iii. And decide you want it, and want to trust in JESUS for your life
 - b. If you haven't ever accepted this Gospel Gift from Jesus, Your journal question is
 - i. What's stopping me?
 - c. Consider accepting that gift tonight for the first time.
- ix. CHRIST FOLLOWERS:
 - 1. In what ways am I still trying to work for my good standing with God?
 - 2. What "works" do I need to lay down, and risk resting from?
- x. SHARE:
- j. GOD HAS WORKED HARD FOR US
 - i. Labor Day Remix!
 - ii. AND this last chunk reminds us he's working STILL!
- k. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
 - i. God is STILL WORKING
 - ii. Working in our world
 - iii. Working in our lives
 - iv. We are God's Great Workmanship – MASTERPIECE!
 - v. His Spirit continuing the great work of making us new, and free, and full.
 - 1. The eternal life ALREADY
 - vi. HIS WORK on the Cross made possible NEW GOOD WORKS through you today
 - 1. Not to EARN your good standing with God
 - 2. But out of the overflow of it
 - vii. Journal:
 - 1. What transforming work do you sense God trying to do in your life recently?
 - 2. What Good Works have you seen him do through you?
 - 3. What Good Works might he be preparing you for?
 - viii. SHARE

10. PRAY

- a. Gratitude
- b. Worship
- c. Celebration for the GREAT LABOR DAY on the Cross
 - i. And in anticipation of the Great Labor Day still to come when Jesus finally returns and defeats all evil and death forever.
 - ii. And raises us to new, resurrected life, in a world without sin, disease, sorrow, or death
 - iii. The world we were made for, and that we long for silently, with every waking moment since our birth
 - iv. So that untold NEW WORKS can begin, that we'll get to participate WITH YOU IN, real, rich, fulfilling and thrilling work like in the Garden, BUT BETTER!
 - 1. WHAT WILL THAT BE LIKE???
- d. Thank you for everything you've done and are doing for us
- e. Help us celebrate well!